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CMS Issues Ruling That Will Harm Patients and Home Infusion Providers

Alexandria, VA – (November 1, 2018) On October 31, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a policy that will impair seniors' ability to receive infusion services in the safety and comfort of their homes. As written, the policy ignores decades of precedent in the private sector, and Congress' intent to provide meaningful coverage for the administration of intravenous and subcutaneous medications in the home setting. The National Home Infusion Association (NHIA), representing providers and suppliers of home and specialty infusion therapy, is deeply disappointed in this shortsighted policy and calls on CMS to revise it to assure patient access to these life-saving services.

Specifically, CMS is maintaining its proposal to limit reimbursement to "the day on which home infusion therapy services are furnished by skilled professionals in the individual's home." This policy is contrary to Congress' intent in both the *21st Century Cures Act* and the *Bipartisan Budget Act*, which sought to provide reimbursement for all home infusion professional services, including case management, medication preparation and compounding (including clean room operations), drug utilization review, coordination with the patient's other health care providers, medication packaging and delivery, and round-the-clock patient support. Further, this reimbursement model reflects archaic policies that rely on in-person, provider-siloed interactions, rather than leveraging technology, interdisciplinary teams, and care coordination.

"At a time when private payers, Congress, and beneficiaries are seeking to modernize health care delivery, the final home infusion rule doubles down on the payment policy of yesteryear," said Bill Noyes, Interim Executive Vice President for the National Home Infusion Association.

"Unfortunately, the result will be more hospitalizations and nursing home visits for beneficiaries, and a higher bill for the taxpayer."

"This rule simply doesn't reflect the reality of how home infusion services are delivered and reimbursed," said Varner Richards, Pharm.D, Chairman of the NHIA Board of Directors and a home infusion pharmacist from Columbia, South Carolina. "We appreciate that CMS left the door open to additional guidance, and the home infusion industry stands ready to work with CMS, the patient community, and our Congressional champions to assure that patients can continue to access high-quality, cost-effective home infusion services."

NHIA is a trade association that represents companies which provide infusion therapy to patients in their homes, as well as companies that manufacture and supply infusion and specialty pharmacy products. Infusion therapy involves patient-specific compounded medications, supplies, and a range of pharmacy, nursing, and other clinical services for delivering care to patients in the home setting. For more information, visit the association at www.nhia.org.